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Minutes 01_20_11

AYHSC Minutes- January 20, 2011
5:30-7:00

Attendance: Natasha Thorne, Christine Connolly, Rebecca Wolfe, Rebecca Meehan, Carlene Newell, Ethel Doyle, Lynn Horgan, Colleen Leger, Jack Flood, Mary DeCoursey

Welcome: Colleen welcomed members and acknowledged members unable to attend meeting tonight due to schedule conflict at the AHS. Colleen provided blank volunteer sheets and asked members to complete with hours they have contributed to the Coalition.

Upcoming Trainings: Colleen informed the group of educational opportunities in the community that are available to members.

Cyberbullying Webinar- Presented by Dr. Elizabeth Englander and sponsored by the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health. Date: 1/25/11 3-4:30 To register: Email Brandy Brooks brandy.brooks@state.ma.us

Marijuana, Bullying, Search and Seizure: Current Legal Issues Surrounding Schools

Michael Fabbri, Esq.-Chief of Homicides, Casey Silvia, Esq.-Deputy Chief of Appeals & Training Bureau; Date: 2/17/11 9-12pm at the Keefe Technical School, Framingham

This conference is for school and law enforcement professionals on topics such as the new marijuana law and how it applies to school searches; school search and seizure of technological devices like cell phones and computers; and public record requests in light of the new legislation, An Act Relative to Bullying. The presenters will give practical applications about how laws impact our day-to-day practice.

Coalition Updates: Colleen invited Coalitions members who have participated in recent trainings to share information learned. A recent training "Can We Scare the Health into our Communities" was attended by Andrea Razi, Kathy Hirsch and Lynn Horgan. Lynn Horgan shared her insights gained from the training. Lynn stated she was very impressed with this online course that examined the use of Fear Based Prevention Strategies and that she was surprised to learn that sometimes when we use fear to change behavior it does not have the effect we want. This program provided insight on ways to become leaders in the field of youth prevention by better understanding youth perceptions of risk. The course offered current research that youth respond better to messages that relate to "what they experience" and/or offer "meaningful alternatives" that allow them to engage in desired behaviors such as bonding with friends.

Parent Forums:

Student Athlete Night: The Coalition is interested in partnering with AHS and the Athletic Department to hold a mandatory event for coaches, AHS athletes and parents either this year, or next. The Coalition reached out to John Underwood and The American Athletic Institute regarding their presentation on the effects of alcohol and drug use on athletic performance. Other topics that could be addressed include: MIAA, zero tolerance enforcement and immediate consequences for athletes who choose to use.

Outreach to PTO's: The Coalition would like to connect with elementary school parents in a "traveling" presentation format vs. having a community wide forum this year. This presentation would offer a non-threatening introduction to youth substance use, media, resources, and advice for parents about communicating with their children.

It seems most relevant to parents of 5th graders who are about to transition to the middle school. While they may not be engaged in these behaviors, it is an opportunity to start having these conversations and promote supportive resources such as the Guiding Good Choices (GGC) as an option for strengthening the family bonds.

Guiding Good Choices (GGC)

The January session is underway with over 15 parents attending.

There is a March trainer workshop being offered in Needham. The Arlington Police Department's new Social Worker, Rebecca Wolfe will be attending.

Cindy Sheridan Curran will be facilitating the spring GGC program with Lynn Horgan as possible co-facilitator. It will be offered on Tuesdays from March 1-29th.

ACMI

Sarah of ACMI wants to work with the Coalition to produce and feature our program and presentation offerings related to substance abuse prevention. They can offer public service announcements (PSA's) on desired topics or provide coverage by taping presentations (like community forum). Colleen asked the group how we might collaborate with them. Christine mentioned need for awareness around cleaning out your medicine cabinet.

Rebecca M. added this could be an opportunity for kids at the OMS & AHS to get involved with production of PSA's or perhaps we could sponsor a video contest. Carlene suggested the AHS' Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) group get involved and Ethel suggested the Arlington Boy's & Girls Club. The group offered ideas about when it should be aired such as before and after the School Committee and Town Meeting programs.

Other Updates:

Robbins Library Teen Coordinator Rebecca M., provided colorful posters advertising their upcoming "Anti-Valentines Day" event being offered on 2/14/11 from 6-8 at the Robbins Library Teen Room. Upcoming programs include; Songwriters Workshop featuring Meg Hutchinson and a free job search workshop will be available in May. Go to www.robbslibrary.org for more information

Action Planning for Grant Year Four:

Colleen provided handouts to the members that outlined the continuous process the Coalition follows. This includes, assessment, capacity, planning, implementation and evaluation. Colleen reviewed last year's goals and Coalition members agreed to continue with goals of increasing community collaboration and reducing youth substance use. Coalition objectives are as follows:

Increase the range and frequency of cross-sector collaborative activities related to healthy youth development and substance abuse prevention

Increase consistent police enforcement of youth substance use violations and public drinking laws

Reduce underage drinking parties

Reduce adult drinking at public youth events

Reduce illegal youth accessibility to prescription medications

Group discussion ensued around these objectives and concerns related to public drinking and prom season.

Planning Discussion for Grant Year Four:

The group identified the following activities to consider addressing in Year Four, which begins October 1, 2011.

These include:

Social Norms Campaign

Social Host Education and Awareness – Members discussed strategies such as increasing neighbor awareness, supporting anonymous reporting, providing information on the law to parents, conducting sticker shock campaigns, airing PSA's, and exploring Safe House model.

Partnering with ACMI to publicize Arlington Youth Health & Safety Coalition programs and services, and develop PSA's related to underage substance use.

Marijuana Law, advocating for policy change around enforcement, drug education requirements and monitoring of community service.

Mandatory student/parent forums for student athletes and other students who participate in school-based extracurricular activities (ie. Music, theater)

Rebecca suggested idea of a "rolling workshop". This mandatory workshop would be offered several times throughout the year, and would be a way to provide education about various social and behavioral issues affecting Arlington youth. Mary offered the idea of appealing to parents concerns and education around *signs to watch out for* related to depression and substance abuse.

